

League of Women Voters of the Helena Area **THE VOTER**

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September 2013

Calendar

- Sept. 24 — Tuesday — Noon to 2— Lewis & Clark Library small meeting room — Membership and Leadership Development program (MLD) orientation — Pizza provided!
- Oct. 15 — *Membership dues for the coming League year are due.* See page 7.
- Oct. 22— Tuesday — Noon — *Montana Historical Society auditorium , 225 N. Roberts*— Energy study presentation and discussion.
- Nov. 5 — Mail ballot election for city mayor and commission seats and Helena School District building reserve.
- Nov. 13— Board meeting—10 a.m.—Barbara Martin's house.
- Nov. 19 — Tuesday — Noon — Lewis & Clark Library small meeting room — Discussion of election topics, including referendum LR-126 on the ballot in 2014 that would eliminate same-day voter registration.
- Dec. 10— Tuesday — Noon — Lewis & Clark Library small meeting room — Observer Corps reports and holiday treats!

President's Message from Barbara Martin

We're starting a new year and we have some exciting activities coming. One is the Membership and Leadership Development program (MLD) sponsored by the LWV-US to increase membership and strengthen leadership. Barbara Harris and Mary Jo Olson, who are on the MLD leadership team in Montana, gave a presentation to the board about the program at our Aug. 23 board meeting. Come to our first meeting of the League year on Sept. 24 to enjoy a pizza lunch and learn more about this program.

Following Barbara and Mary Jo's presentation, the board discussed how we might improve visibility in Helena and build membership. Some ideas are to begin observing public meetings such as the City-County Planning Board, Rocky Mountain Development Council and Hometown Helena; develop relationships with other organizations, and wear our LWV badges when we go; share League member stories in the *Voter*, and advertise our meetings in the Helena Independent Record community calendar. There's more about this in other articles in this *Voter*. Come to the meeting and bring your ideas!

(continued on next page)

Memories . . . On Aug. 20 Diane Williams, Sue Hoell, Joy Bruck and I went through the old Helena League files to clean out the file cabinet that's been in my basement for 20-plus years and donate materials to the Montana Historical Society. We accomplished our mission and were treated to a trip down memory lane. The shared stories were wonderful, and I wish we could have recorded them.

The board discussed having a social event, such as a wine tasting or salad lunch to attract prospective members and build interest in League.

LWV-MT Convention attendees chose energy as a program for this year. Sue Hoell, Mari Katherine Hodges and Joan Bishop have been working over the summer on energy topics and have invited members from other Leagues to participate and review the LWV-MT position and create a Helena League position on energy. The Bozeman League conducted a study last year, so concurrence or using their position as a model is a possible outcome. Energy will be the subject of our meeting in October.

LWV-MT will lead the effort to defeat LR-126 that, if approved by voters, would eliminate election-day voter registration. Local leagues will be working with LWV-MT to defeat this ballot measure in 2014. Expect to hear more about this effort later in the fall.

See you Sept. 24!

Barbara Martin — barb.martin@bresnan.net

Membership and Leadership Development

Mary Jo Olson and Barb Harris attended a two-day Membership and Leadership Development workshop in Bozeman July 28-29 organized and led by state and national League representatives, and attended by representatives from local Leagues from Bozeman, Missoula, Billings and Helena. This is an ongoing program that has been introduced throughout the country to help local Leagues increase their memberships and to train within the local and state Leagues.

Plans and strategies were discussed and practiced in the two sessions, which will be introduced to the local Leagues in the coming months.

Ideas were also shared on how to make the LWV more visible in our local communities.

The workshop was designed so that the members of local Leagues could return to their respective leagues and share ideas and practices with them. A workshop with the LWV-Helena is planned for our Sept. 24 meeting.

Observer Corps

One of the things discussed at the recent Membership and Leadership Development workshop in Bozeman was how to increase the League presence in our community.

We will be looking for volunteers to attend meetings of organizations such as: City/County Consolidated Planning Board, Rocky Mountain Development Council, Hometown Helena, service organizations, etc. If you would prefer to attend with someone as a mentor, that can be arranged, as we have League members who have acted as observers in the past.

Please be thinking of this. You would not have to participate—just attend the meetings (with your provided LWV button on) as an observer.

Please let Barbara Martin know if you would consider doing this.

Developing a Local League Energy Position

Committee members Sue Hoell, Mari Katherine Hodges and Joan Bishop have been reviewing a wide array of cutting-edge information on current coal and energy issues.

The current LWV-MT energy position, which is under review this year, includes:

- Protecting the environment.
- Energy conservation in building codes, transportation and community planning.
- Keeping energy rates where they reflect actual cost, in an economically sound energy market, including tax assessment to address the impact on communities.
- Balancing the interests of energy producers, consumers and protection of the environment in an open, decision-making process.
- Creating jobs in development of renewables at similar or higher levels than exist in fossil fuel development.
- Decentralizing energy production and distribution.
- Prioritizing energy processes—rail transportation is preferable to in-state energy conversion and coal slurry pipelines.
- Energy education for children and adults.

Additional items addressed in the national energy position (many items are duplicated in the national and state positions):

- Limit reliance on nuclear energy.
- Consider peak-load pricing.
- Assistance for low-income energy needs.
- Consideration of international impacts of energy development, transportation and usage.

2013 Relevant Conditions in Helena

Increasingly serious fire and weather conditions and related consequences of those conditions (beetle kill, erosion, wildlife, water quality, agriculture).

Trains carrying coal and petroleum products are proposed to go through Helena in much larger numbers. Damage to air, water and soil quality adjacent to the railroad routes, especially if derailments occur, as well as interruptions in road traffic, including emergency vehicles.

Members interested in joining this study group should contact Sue at s1hoell@msn.com.

Aug. 23 Board Meeting Report

Barbara Harris and Mary Jo Olson told the board about the Membership Leadership Development (MLD) program they received training on, and will be presenting that information at League's first meeting of the League year on Sept. 24 from 12 noon to 2 p.m. at the library. Pizza will be provided.

Board consensus was that reinvigorating our observer corps would be a good start at increasing visibility, influence and membership. Several board members offered to participate in a new observer corps, and it is hoped other League members will also be interested in participating.

A number of ideas were offered for increasing membership, such as just asking people to join, noting that an invitation to join a prestigious organization can be quite flattering. Inviting a prospective member to lunch or mingling at community events while wearing an LWV pin might be fruitful. Attending meetings and giving presentations to other groups was another idea. Mary Jo Olson will order pins for League members.

As part of the MLD effort, a wine tasting was suggested. A salad lunch was also mentioned as a membership magnet. We need to designate someone to follow up on guests who would attend an event. We should encourage men as well as women to join League.

Barbara Martin wondered if our local League should register with the Secretary of State as a non-profit. (The state League is registered.) She will check into this a little more.

The LWV-MT board will develop strategy for opposing the same-day election registration eliminating referendum (LR-126). If that strategy is ready by November, we will look at that as part of our November meeting on election and voting issues. We will also try to track the progress of the parental notification bill passed in the 2013 legislature, which was to be brought before a court to determine constitutionality.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Nov. 13 at Barbara Martin's house.

Preliminary Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the LWV-Helena Area May 21, 2013

Co-President Barbara Martin called the meeting to order. Joy Bruck volunteered to serve as secretary and parliamentarian.

Barbara explained the change needed in the bylaws to Article III, Sec. 2A removing the word “honorary” to comply with the LWV-US membership statement. The removal motion was by Gail Hewitt, seconded by Barb Harris. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Julie Huntington, seconded by Sue Hoell, to approve the 2012 annual meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Treasurer Marcy McLean gave the treasurer’s report, and reported the audit of the books is complete. Barb Harris moved to accept the treasurer’s report. Mary Jo Olson seconded. Motion carried.

Marcy then presented the 2013-2014 budget. There will be no increase in dues, a \$100 pledge to LWV-MT, and no specific fund raising. Mait Board moved to approve. Seconded by Sue Hoell. Motion carried.

LWV of the Helena Area will be represented at the Membership-Leadership Training by Barb Harris and Mary Jo Olson. LWV-US will provide funding.

Local programs: Following some discussion, Mait Board moved to keep our local positions as they are currently. Mari Katherine Hodges seconded. Motion carried.

New study: Following discussion, it was decided that we take a look at how the LWV-MT state energy study may affect our local area. Sue Hoell will take the lead.

Nominations: The slate of officers and directors for 2013-2014 was presented. There were no nominations from the floor. The secretary cast a unanimous ballot and the slate was approved.

Mari Katherine Hodges moved the meeting be adjourned. Motion was seconded by Sue Hoell and it carried.

League of Women Voters in Perspective

Here are some tidbits from *The League of Women Voters in Perspective 1920-1995* authored by Nancy Neuman and published in 1994:

- The 1960s are known as a decade of turmoil, activism and political change. But much of the groundwork for reform was laid in the 1950s.
- The community-based “War on Poverty” and the civil rights movement were tailor-made for the grassroots League. Equal opportunity in education, employment and housing, as well as programs to alleviate poverty, were central to LWV activity. Through the LWVEF’s Inner City project, local Leagues and inner-city organizations worked jointly to provide voter education and effective citizen participation projects.
- As the League continued to use the tactics of persuasion and public education in the 1960s, other groups took to the streets. Political action turned toward protest. The nonviolent tactics of the civil rights movement begun in the late 1950s were adopted by the anti-Vietnam war movement and new groups claiming equal rights. As the decade wore on, massive demonstrations, sit-ins and boycotts pushed the political agenda from the outside, while groups such as the LWV continued a deliberate approach from inside the government structure.
- Much of the LWV’s activity in the 1980s required restoring or protecting gains won in the 1960s and 1970s. The LWV battled threats to civil rights, women’s equality and environmental protection in Congress and the courts. Responding to the arms buildup, the LWVUS studied military policy and national security, while the LWVEF conducted educational programs on arms control. As poverty increased, especially among women and children, the LWVUS restudied and reaffirmed its commitment to alleviating poverty and reforming the welfare system.
- Historically, the LWV has been the most common training ground for women who enter public office as elected and appointed officials. This outstanding achievement is rarely used to attract new members, yet of all the LWV’s assets, its ability to prepare women for public life may be its finest legacy to the nation. With more women now serving in public office, the LWV’s role is to support their efforts on the inside of a traditionally male environment by pushing the agenda from the outside.

Annual membership dues are due by Oct. 15th

Our bylaws call for dues to be paid by Oct. 15.

There has been discussion in the past of raising our dues, but we have elected to keep them at \$45. However, if any members would like to remit more than that, it would be greatly appreciated. This is why: \$31 of each member's dues goes to make per member payment (PMP) to national League, and \$9 goes to pay per member payment to state League. That leaves only \$5 a year per member for our local League to operate on, and it has become a struggle to do so.

Your check should be mailed to Marcy McLean, 9 Reeders Village Dr., Helena MT 59601 along with address/phone/e-mail updates so we can keep contact information current. You may use the form below if you wish.

Thank you!

LWV Membership Dues

Please mail your check to:

Marcy McLean
9 Reeders Village Dr.
Helena MT 59601

Here is my check for \$45 (or more—see above) made out to “LWV of the Helena Area” to cover my LWV dues for the upcoming League year.

Name: _____

Address: _____ ZIP _____

Phone number: _____ E-mail: _____

League of Women Voters of the Helena Area

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